Awareness on Gender and Development (GAD) of Local Government Officials

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ARTICLE INFORMATION	ABSTRACT
	This study was conducted to determine the level of awareness on Gender and Development (GAD) of Local Government Officials in Pila, Laguna through identifying the respondents' characteristics; GAD as to Trainings and Seminars and Policies, level of awareness on Gender Issues and Gender Roles, and the significant effect of the GAD seminars and trainings and Policies to the level awareness of LGU Officials. A descriptive method was used in order to collect data with reliable resources for an accurate interpretation of findings. The research instrument was formulated and was distributed to one hundred fifty (150) LGU Officials. Based on the data analyzed, the following results were gathered; most of the respondents belong to age range of 41-60, male, and married. The Level of awareness on GAD activities of LGU Officials in terms of Trainings and Seminars and Policies were interpreted as "Very Satisfactory." The level of respondents' awareness to Gender Issues and Gender Roles were interpreted as "Satisfactory." It was also found out that GAD Trainings and Seminars and Policies have no significant effect on the respondents' awareness in terms of gender issues and gender roles. On the foregoing, the researchers inferred that the town of Pila, Laguna has effective seminars and trainings and policies, and the respondents are somewhat aware on gender issues and gender roles. The activities conducted have effects on gender issues and gender roles of the respondents.

1. Introduction

Gender equality is considered a critical element in achieving Decent Work for All Women and Men, in order to effect social and institutional change that leads to sustainable development with equity and growth. Gender equality refers to equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities that all persons should enjoy, regardless of whether one is born male or female.

The fundamental equality before the law of women and men is the legal mandate in Gender and Development, which is provided for in the 1987 Philippine Constitution. This recognition is carried out through Republic Act No. 7160 or the Local Government Code of 1991 (LGC), and Republic Act No. 7192 known as the Women in Development and Nation Building Act. These national legislations were enacted as part of the Philippine Government's commitments to the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to pursue women's empowerment and gender equality in the country.

Accordingly, the government issued Executive Order No. 273 approving and adopting the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (PPGD), 1995-2025 wherein agencies and local government units are mandate to institutionalize

Gender and Development (GAD) by incorporating the GAD concerns spelled out in the PPGD in their planning, programming and budgeting processes.

The Magna Carta of Women (Republic Act No. 9710) enacted on August 14, 2009 is the latest law that pushes government's action by adopting gender mainstreaming as a strategy to promote and fulfill women's human rights and eliminate gender discrimination in government systems, structures, policies, programs, processes and procedures.

Local Government Unit GAD mainstreaming down to the Barangay Unit, the types of services provided to address specific needs of women and men; and types of services in the following areas such as Education and Health.

Shelter and Housing, Women's and Child Protection Against Violence, Environmental protection, Welfare and community development, Agricultural and other economic activities. The processes and mechanisms installed as well as the capabilities developed and built within the barangay to deliver such services. Establishing enabling structures and mechanisms, representation and participation of women in local special body and other councils, access to and use of information, allocation of resources. Gender responsiveness through policy issuances and ordinances and building capacities to address gender issues and concerns.

2. Literature Review
Gender and development is an interdisciplinary field of research and applied study that implements a feminist approach to understanding and addressing the disparate impact that economic development and globalization have on people based upon their location, gender, class background, and other socio-political identities.

Desposate et.al (2009), the terms 'Participation' and 'Gender' have become a part of development discourse and practices in the last few decades. Advocates of these concepts have claim that they allow for representation of the most marginalized groups such as women and the poor.

The advancement of women in society, evidenced by the growing number of women prime ministers or those who hold high political office, does not always extend into business. The scarcity of women in boardrooms can be attributed to many causes, not the least of which are social conditioning and the lack of support for female advancement certain sectors of society. However, once a woman does get into a leadership role within a company community, various differences come to light, including a more cooperative style of leadership (Eisner, 2013).

The way it represents and understand the world is transmitted through non-gender-neutral language (FAO, 2011). Language reflects the participation of the roles abilities and opportunities attributed to men and women ('man for the job' 'housewife' 'elder statesman' 'femme fatale' and etc.). It conveys and reinforce sexiest prejudices and stereotypes. Although language too can evolve, it is restricting the scope of the social, political, and economic development and transformations currently bringing about changes in the division of male and female roles and responsibilities. A guideline for Gender Sensitivity Training (GST) prepared by Gurung, et.al., (2009), entail an understanding of existing gender relations and the obstacles to women's active participation in the training process.

Groschi (2012), gender inequalities are still deep-rooted in every society. Women suffer from lack of access to decent work and face occupational segregation and gender wage gaps. In many situations, they are denied access to basic education and health care and victims of violence and discrimination. They are under- represented in political and decision-making processes. Hofstede, G., (2013), masculinity versus femininity describes how cultures aim at reaching their goals. In masculinity cultures people tend to be assertive and competitive, and they value performance and achievements. In feminine culture individuals are the modest and they take care of the others and quality of life. The gender roles are clearly separated in masculine societies, whereas feminine cultures and sexes are more equal (Miller et al 2008).

Gender roles are the task and activities a culture assign to the sexes. Related to gender roles are gender stereotypes, which are oversimplified but strongly held ideas about the characteristics of males and females. Gender Stratification describes an unequal distribution of rewards (socially valued resources, power, prestige, human rights, and personal freedom) between men and women, reflecting their different positions in a social hierarchy (Kottak, 2010),

Masters, et.al (2015), discrimination is a behavior based on the unfair attitude. If you believe a particular race of people tends to be lazy, you display a discrimination attitude. If you were an employer and refused to himself people of that race, you would be guilty of discrimination. Prejudice is a term that is often used in connection with discrimination. It means to prejudice form of an opinion without taking the time and effort to judge fairly. If you have decided that people belonging to a particular group are inferior, you will likely prejudge all people you meet belonging so that group. When you prejudge a person based solely on being a member of some group, rather than on what he or she is like as an individual, you are showing prejudice.

Another important issue that affects large parts of the world is human trafficking (Sandberg, 2013). This problem arises because of the weak structures at the grass root level whereby women are focused into conditions which lead to their trafficking. Human trafficking takes place because of the terrible socioeconomic conditions prevailing in the local area. Violence against women and trafficking of women and girls are issued which demand strong legal measures along with ground level action.

People harbor many misconceptions against gays and lesbians, otherwise known as the "third sex". They not only suffer harassment and discrimination but have minimal rights under the law. They are discriminated on when seeking employment. They are victims of such unwarranted emotions as disgust, fear or hatred. Child custody rights and visitation privileges are issues for homosexual parent. Gays and lesbians suffer not only sexual harassment but also verbal harassment. They are the butt of jokes in certain segments of society. A number of gays and lesbians experience assaults and physical violence (San Juan, et.al, 2013)

Sarabia (2009), reveals that passage of the Magna Carta of Women, local government officials would take their own initiatives in eradicating violence against women and children. Since training any woman friendly program become mandatory. As compare before with the passage of VAWS (RA 9062), local government official will only create a program defend whether they recognize the law or not. This law becomes a key factor for the Philippines to have gender-responsive local governance.

Gender stereotypes have made it difficult for women who have the necessary leadership skills to be accepted as leaders. Instead of encouraging powerful and decisive women leaders (Stelter, 2002), societies around the world see the traits as being positive male traits and negative female traits. Successful women leaders find their way through this double-bind by adopting a cooperative, instead of autocratic, style of leadership to gain acceptance within the community.

The gender system functions as a form of social stratification in which the traits and behaviors of males and females are unequally valued in most cultural societies. Many social institutions still reward and punish its members based on gender, and that principle profoundly affects the lives and opportunities of both males and females (Umans, 2008).

In UNESCO (2011), Priority Gender Equality Guidelines reveals that the overall workload of girls and women often needs to be reduced to allow them sufficient rest and to take part in more productive activities. In addition to providing labor saving technological devices it is important to encourage boys and men to take responsibility for household duties.

According to Zembar et.al (2001), as cited by Jacobs (2009), most study show that an average, girls do better in school than boys. Girls' get higher grade and complete high school at a higher rate compared to boys. At standardized achievement test also shown that females are better at spelling, and perform better on tests of literacy, writing, and general knowledge.

3. Methodology
Using a descriptive research design, the study was conducted in Pila, Laguna. This method was used to determine the Gender and Development awareness of LGU Officials.

A descriptive method was used in order to collect data with reliable resources for an accurate interpretation of findings. The research instrument was formulated and was distributed to one hundred fifty (150) LGU Officials. Based on the data analyzed, the following results were gathered; most of the respondents belong to age range of 41-60, male, and married.

Purposive sampling was used in the study. This method is a non-probability sampling and it can be defined as "a sampling method of gathering representative data from a group. Application of quota sampling ensures that sample group represents certain characteristics of the population chosen by the researcher. The interview with the matrix of the target population that is represented and potential respondents were selected according to that matrix.

Using questionnaire, the data were obtained and the responses were analyzed and summarized based on the emerging themes aligned to the objectives of the study.

4.Results and Discussion

This research focused on the determinants of the level of awareness on Gender and Development (GAD) of Local Government Officials in Pila, Laguna as to Trainings and Seminars and Policies, level of awareness on Gender Issues and Gender Roles, and the significant effect of the GAD seminars and trainings and Policies to the level awareness of LGU Officials.

The findings of the study provide a discussion on the four main areas of Gender Sensitivity Training Workshop as an aid for better awareness and implementation of Gender and Development in Pila, Laguna *(1) Strengths* – the Gender Sensitivity Training (GST) Workshop offers that benefits LGU Officials in Pila, Laguna and other LGU that would adopt the same and *(2) Weaknesses* – everything that prevents the Gender Sensitivity Training Workshop to offer full awareness and integration; *(3) Opportunities* – enhancement of Gender Sensitive Services among constituents and *(4) Threats* – external factors which are potential threats to Gender Sensitivity Training Workshop.

4.1 Strengths

The Gender Sensitivity Training Workshop representing its strength were two (2) main areas: (1) GAD Training and Seminars that leads to an excellent leadership towards continuous improvement, and (2) LGU Policies resulting to a well-built community.

Since the Municipality of Pila has excellent leadership during the time of this research, continuously growing and coaching people about the Gender and Development, such training and seminars that would be applicable to their well-defined policies.

Based on the result of the study, the municipality of Pila in Laguna recognizes equal opportunities for advancement of gender awareness. One of the leaders' priorities is the expansion of services by developing training and seminars on gender awareness; the reason why they initiated community coaching and supported constituents in obtaining gender awareness.

These could be beneficial in the further integration of GST workshop in the Local Government of Pila, Laguna for the full awareness of its officials.

4.2 Weaknesses

Weaknesses represent everything that everything that prevents the Gender Sensitivity Training Workshop to offer full awareness and integration. There were two (2) main weaknesses that were identified: (1) Unrealized individual roles in GAD that led to insufficiency of awareness on Gender Roles, and (2) Differing perception of LGU Officials in addressing the Gender Issues (see table 1).

LGU Officials are not fully aware on Gender Roles and Gender Issues, despite of the leader's initiatives towards GAD awareness and integration to government service. Possible Gender Sensitivity Training Workshop may give different perception on LGU Officials.

With the Local Government initiatives, the individual roles of LGU Officials seem unrealized. Previous gender-related initiatives were not put into practice.

These may defeat objectives of integrating the GST Workshop in the Municipal Government of Pila, Laguna

4.3 Opportunities

Opportunities are the possible updates and creative solutions to improve GST Workshop. There were three (3) main opportunities seen: (1) Strengthens public servants, (2) Compliance to GAD National Mandates, and (3) Advancement of government services (see Table 1).

Gender Sensitivity Workshop would benefit the LGU Officials by reforming their services into a GAD-centered model thus, strengthens the will as public servants and further compliance to the National Government Mandates.

Advancement of government services in LGUs is likely by being GAD advocates of the Officials. As a result, public service among the Municipal Government of Pila, Laguna would be a good opportunity to for possible recognitions from the National Government that could be a venue for a community economic growth.

4.4 Threats

Threats are external factors which are potential threats to GST Workshop. There were two (2) possible threats seen: (1) Unmet Objectives of GST Workshop towards stakeholders, and (2) Discontinuance of failure to conduct regular GST Workshop.

Municipal Government is the foundation of every community. When GST Workshop will be initiated or further enhanced in Pila, Laguna, stakeholders may not be participative as the training/workshop demands them.

There is always resistance to change. GAD is no new to stakeholders, nevertheless, objectives were remained unmet. Further implementation or integration to government service, is a challenge on the part of the Leaders, LGU Officials, residents and the National government as the implementing authority.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn. It can be concluded that most of the respondents belong to age range of 12-70, most of them are male and married.

The researcher inferred that the respondents are aware on the conducted training seminars and trainings and are aware of the policy guidelines of the Municipality. As LGU Officials, the respondents are somewhat aware on gender issues within the Municipality and on their gender roles. It was concluded that the conducted seminars and trainings and the Municipal policies have significant effect with perceived awareness on community gender issues and the respondents' gender roles, therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Gender Sensitivity Training Workshop opens a new venue to a more harmonize and productive community. Integrating and mainstreaming GAD to the government services will uplift the quality of service among constituents.

Amidst the threats, glimpse of opportunity is seen through cooperation of stakeholders of the Municipal Government of Pila, Laguna along with other stakeholders towards improved efficiency in a gender sensitive – centered community.

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Appendix

Table 1: Awareness on Gender and Development (GAD) of Local Government Officials

Strengths	Weaknesses
- Excellent leadership towards continuous improvement. - Well-built community guided with Local Government policies	- Unrealized individual roles in GAD - Differing perception of LGU Officials
Opportunities	**Threats**
- Strengthens public servants - Compliance to GAD National Mandates - Advancement of government services	- Unmet Objectives of GST Workshop - Discontinuance of failure to conduct regular GST Workshop.